



## HOME Fair Housing Audit 2007 - 2008 Results Summary

### **Compliance with Accessibility Requirements (Seven cities of Hampton Roads, central Virginia)**

Site visits to 20 complexes with permits ranging from 2003 – 2008 for the Fair Housing Office, an additional 13 in Tidewater

One site appeared to have no violations. The rest **(97%) had from one to eight potential violations of the accessibility requirements.**

- Some violations were minor (environmental controls ½" too high)
- Some violations are defended by the complex as the result of site impracticability
- Based on the date of the Certificate of Occupancy some complexes may be past the date for enforcement action

### **Testing for Treatment of Home Seekers (Seven cities of Hampton Roads)**

**I. Race:** differential treatment between African-Americans and whites  
50 matched pair tests

- **66% of African-American testers received less favorable treatment than whites (some localities much higher)**
- 70% of the sites were managed by property management companies or involved a licensed real estate agent (about 50%)

**II. Families with children**  
20 tests

- 15% discouraged
- 85% accepted at the two person per bedroom standards

**III. People with disabilities**

Will unit allow reasonable modifications (installation of grab bars)?  
25 tests

- 20% rejected or discouraged
- 80% would permit

Will unit make reasonable accommodation (service animal where "no pets" or silent on pets)?

- 76% rejected, discouraged or imposed fees
- 24% willing to make accommodation

#### **IV. Housing Choice Voucher holders:**

Will housing providers with units that would meet rent reasonableness test for vouchers accept a voucher?

20 tests

- 85% discouraged or rejected
- 15% were willing to accept a voucher



Examples of differences in treatment on the basis of race:

- Testers visited the property on the same afternoon. The black tester was told the rents were between \$1049 and \$1104; the white tester was told to ignore the prices in the brochure as the agent could offer specials reducing the rents to \$969-999.
- The black tester was told that one unit would be available that month; the white tester was told by the same agent on the same day that several one and two bedroom units were currently available. The black tester asked to see the unit but was told it could not be shown; the white tester was given the keys to view the unit after the agent checked her ID.
- Both testers asked about a one bedroom unit for the end of November. The black tester was told nothing was available until next month; the white tester was told there are two vacant units.
- Both testers talked to the same agent within an hour of each other about a one bedroom apartment. The black tester was told one unit would be available with \$132 application fee and one month's rent (\$929) security deposit; the white tester was told a few one bedrooms would be available that month and the following month with a \$32 application fee and security deposit of \$250.
- Both testers asked the same agent for information on a one bedroom apartment. The black tester was told one unit would be available; the white tester was told two units would be available. Both testers were told the unit was unavailable to show until after cleaning, but the agent offered to show the white tester a two bedroom unit while the black tester was told to come back the following day. The agent offered an application to the white tester but not to the black tester. The white tester received follow up correspondence from the agent while the black tester did not.
- Both testers were told that no one bedroom apartments were currently available. The black tester was told she would have to complete and submit an application with the fee in order to be placed on the waiting list; the same agent took the white tester's contact information and put her on the waiting list.

- Both testers asked about one bedroom apartments for the end of January. The black tester was told one unit would be available for \$679 and a security deposit of \$99; the white tester was told that two different one bedroom units would be available for rent, one for \$649 and one with a den for \$679 and that they were running a special waiving the security deposit.
- Both testers talked with the same agent about a one bedroom unit. The agent told the black tester they had nothing available and to just try back in a couple of months; the same agent told the white tester to call back in January (2 weeks later) to see if they had received any notices.
- The testers saw the same agent on the same day. The black tester was told nothing was available and told the apartment she was shown was already rented. The white tester was shown the same unit and told it was available along with several other units. The black tester asked about a waiting list, and was told they had a waiting list, but that people rarely move.
- Both testers saw the same agent on the same day. The landlord told the white tester that the apartment was immediately available for \$800. Thirty minutes later he told the black tester that the \$800 apartment was gone, but he had one for \$900. He told the black tester "we are very selective about who we let in", asked her about her profession, her income, her credit, told her only the person who signs the lease is allowed to stay in the unit, told her "we are really meticulous" and asked her if she is a clean person, asked whether she can afford the apartment, and told her there is no need for her to take an application until she decides on the place. The white tester was asked no questions about her income, cleanliness, ability to afford the apartment, and was told that he does not check credit and that he does not have applications. He told the white tester he could tell she was "his kind of person", asked if she wanted the unit and got her contact information.
- The testers spoke to the same agent within a half hour of each other. The black tester was told that one 1 bedroom unit would be available; the white tester was told they had plenty of one bedrooms available.
- The testers were given similar information about the availability of a single family house, and both were given applications; however, the white tester was told that if any of the information on the application was "too personal", she should mention it and they would "work something out."